



Board of Trustees Meeting Agenda

October 15, 2026 at 5:30 p.m.

[Zoom Link](#)

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Roll Call**
- 3. Welcome Guests**
- 4. Approval of Agenda***
- 5. Public Comment****
- 6. Approval of September 24, 2026 Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes***
- 7. Chair's Report**
 - a. Selection of 2027 Board Retreat Date: August 6, 13 or 20
 - b. Board-Foundation Successor Memorandum of Agreement Update
 - c. NYCCT Webinar: Federal Earmarks Webinar Participation
- 8. Treasurer/CFO Report**
 - a. Update on Year-end Close Process
 - b. 2026-27 Operating & Capital Budget
- 9. Student Trustee's Report**
- 10. President's Report**
 - a. Vice President Reports
 - b. College Governance Structure
 - c. Middle States preparation and training
 - d. Resolution to Discontinue Culinary Arts A. A. S.*
 - e. 2027 Advocacy Planning
- 11. Policies**
 - a. Resolution on Signature Authority Policy*
 - b. Resolution on Conflict of Interest Policy*
- 12. Affiliate Updates**
 - New York Community College Trustees (NYCCT)
 - Campus Governance
 - TC3 Foundation

Mission: We foster lifelong curiosity and inquiry through innovative educational pathways, leading students to meaningful work, economic growth, and a brighter future.

Vision: To advance personal, economic, and social vitality in our communities through the transformative power of learning.

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13. County Liaison Update

- Cortland County
- Tompkins County

14. Adjournment*

Informational Items

- ACCT Connect
- NYCCT October 2026 Board Chair Update

Calendar Items (Note: Middle States items subject to change)

- Board of Trustees Middle States Prep (virtual), 5:00-6:00 p.m., October 22, 2026
- Board Finance & Audit Committee Meeting, November 4, 2026
- Middle States Accreditation Visit, November 8-11, 2026
- Board of Trustees Middle States Dinner, November 8, 2026
- Board of Trustees Middle States Interview, 4:00-5:00 p.m., November 9, 2026
- Middle States Presentation, 11:00 a.m., November 11, 2026
- Board of Trustees Meeting, November 19, 2026
- December Graduation Celebration, December 4, 2026

***Board vote required**

****Public comment:** Provision is made at this point in the agenda for citizens of the College community to make comments regarding any agenda item to be discussed at that meeting. Citizens will not be recognized at any other time except at the request of the Chairperson after approval for such recognition by a unanimous vote of the Trustees in attendance. No person, not a member of the Board, shall speak for more than five (5) minutes without specific approval of a majority of the Trustees. The minutes shall show that privilege of the floor was granted and shall include a brief statement of the subject matter presented.

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Minutes

Minutes
September 24, 2026
Open Session at 5:30 p.m.

Present: Dean Corbin, Sue Dale-Hall, Judy Davison, Frank Kruppa, Matt McSherry, Seth Peacock, Lisa Perfetti

Excused: Roxann Buck, Jose Leon, Schelley Michell-Nunn

Staff: Dave Fish, Barbara Gates, John Geer, Casey Goodwin, Penelope Howard, Eric Jenex, Jonathan Walz-Koeppel, Amy Kremenek, Nancy Murphy, Joe Oravec, Rob Palmieri, Malvika Talwar, Kelly Tobin, Susanna Van Sant, Victoria Zeppelin

1. **Call to Order** Meeting was called to order at 5:32 p.m. by Chair Dale-Hall.
2. **Roll Call:** Ms. Murphy called roll.
3. **Welcome Guests:** No guests were present. Chair Dale-Hall introduced Barbara Gates, Interim Controller, in the Finance office. She joined TC3 in August.
4. **Approval of Agenda:** Ms. Davison moved to approve the agenda, seconded by Mr. Kruppa, motion approved unanimously.
5. **Public Comment:** There was no public comment.
6. **Approval of July 16, 2026 Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes:** Mr. McSherry moved that the minutes from the July 16, 2026 meeting be approved as submitted; seconded by Ms. Perfetti, motion approved unanimously.
7. **Presentation:** Arthur Kuckes Childcare Center Update by Casey Goodwin, Director of the Child Care Center, and Joe Oravec, PhD., Interim Associate Vice President of Student Affairs. Ms. Goodwin provided an overview of the center's enrollment process, the families served, and current enrollment numbers. She also reviewed comparative childcare rates, the center's accreditation status, assessment practices, staffing models, and classroom ratios.
8. **Chair's Report**
 - a. Resolution in Memory of Trustee Emerita Beverly Baker: Mr. Kruppa moved that the resolution in Memory of Trustee Emerita Beverly Baker be approved as submitted; seconded by Ms. Perfetti, motion approved unanimously. President

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Kremenek shared that Ms. Baker's name and photo were submitted to ACCT to be recognized at the ACCT Congress Conference in their In Memoriam presentation this fall.

- b. Appointment of Finance and Audit Committee Members: Ms. Perfetti moved that the resolution on Appointment of Finance and Audit Committee Members 2026-27 be approved as submitted; seconded by Ms. Davidson, motion approved unanimously.
- c. Board-Foundation Successor Memorandum of Agreement: Anticipate it will be brought to the October Board meeting, Ms. Michell-Nunn and Ms. Dale-Hall are the Board representatives.
- d. Board of Trustees Retreat – Reflections: Professional development was identified as a goal during the Board of Trustees Retreat. Available professional development opportunities will be identified and highlighted for the Board.
- e. NYCCT Advocacy Liaison: Chair Dale-Hall formally identified Ms. Buck as the NYCCT Advocacy Liaison.

9. **Treasurer/CFO Report**

- a. Finance and Audit Committee Report – Assistant Treasurer Kruppa, who chaired the September Finance and Audit Committee meeting, stated that the Signature Authority and Conflict of Interest draft policies were reviewed and the committee provided brief feedback.
- b. Monthly Financial Statements ending 7/31/26 – Ms. Howard, Interim VP of Finance reported core enrollment for spring and summer 2026 was higher than budgeted, resulting in increased tuition and fee revenue. Overall spending was approximately 1% over budget. The increase in expenses was primarily attributable to higher enrollment, which resulted in increased staffing needs and associated costs. Core tuition and fee revenue through July 31 exceeded the budget.
- c. 2026-27 Operating & Capital Budget – The 2026–27 Operating and Capital Budget was adopted, approved by the counties, and passed at the SUNY level on September 15. At the college level, contractual spending has been reduced by 40 percent due to an enrollment decline for fall and rising fixed expenses for utilities and health insurance etcetera. The budget is currently operating on an Executive Council–managed cycle, with funds being released by semester. In alignment with the Corrective Action Plan, the Finance Office is developing policies and calendars to establish and maintain best practices. President Kremenek reported that she presented the 2026–27 capital budget request to the Tompkins County Legislature on September 22 and was asked to prioritize the college's projects. Funding from Cortland County has already been secured. The college is required to receive funding from both Cortland County and Tompkins County in order to qualify for the corresponding State match.

10. **Student Trustee's Report**

Mr. Leon was excused.

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11. President's Report

- a. Vice President Reports – There was a question on update to program names. President Kremenek shared the updates were made to make sure the name properly reflects the program, Liberal Arts and Sciences Psychology and Liberal Arts and Humanities - English.
- b. 2026-27 President's Annual Goals – President Kremenek reviewed her annual goals with the Board, which were previously shared at the Board retreat, and invited discussion. The goals are now finalized and ready for distribution to the campus community.
- c. Considerations for Future of Concurrent Enrollment & Early Degree – Rob Palmieri, VP of Enrollment Management & Student Affairs presented on the COSER model for CollegeNow, keeping commitment to students and a focus on purposeful pathways.
- d. Fall 2026 Enrollment Snapshot – Mr. Palmieri stated that the college is flat in headcount from last fall, below budget by 70 full-time enrollment (FTE). Mitigating this is Fall 2 (courses start at September 29), currently offering 14 programs. There are about 50 students in it exclusively. We are looking to expand and offer Spring 2. Focus shifting now to spring and summer to make up for budget.

12. Policies

- a. Resolution on the Attendance Policy: Mr. McSherry moved the Attendance Policy be approved as submitted; seconded by Ms. Perfetti; motion carried unanimously.
- b. Resolution on Student Billing, Collection, and Payment Enforcement Policy: Mr. Kruppa moved the Student Billing, Collection and Payment Enforcement Policy be approved as submitted; seconded by Mr. Corbin; motion carried unanimously.

13. Affiliate Updates

- New York Community College Trustees (NYCCT): Ms. Buck was excused.
- Campus Governance Update: Faculty Senate Chair Eric Jenes reported that elections had taken place and that the Senate's first meeting included discussion and feedback on policies, promotion guidelines, committee work, and the selection of a delegate to the Faculty Council on Community Colleges (FCCC). College Senate Chair Jonathan Koepfel-Walz reported that College Senate is working closely with Faculty Senate to clarify the distinctions between the two bodies. College Senate is compiling a list of campus committees. College Senate is looking at their membership – seeking a broader cross section beyond union affiliation categories.
- TC3 Foundation: Chief Advancement Officer and Executive Director of the TC3 Foundation Kelly Tobin reported that the Foundation is conducting a deeper review of scholarships and the reconciliation of funds between the College and Foundation. The goal is to better understand current processes and establish consistent practices for administering funds. The Foundation is also updating its policies and reviewing its database and contact records to support an annual alumni appeal focused on sharing a student success story.

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14. **County Liaison Update:** Mr. Cleland and Mr. Wakeman were excused.
15. **Adjournment:** Mr. McSherry moved that the meeting be adjourned at 7:12 p.m.; seconded by Ms. Davidson, approved unanimously.

Nancy C. Murphy
Clerk to the Board of Trustees
Tompkins Cortland Community College

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Financial and Budget Update

Finance Report to the Board of Trustees — October 2026

Status remains largely the same since the last set of financial statements presented a few weeks ago, so this is a brief update. Work continues on the priorities previously reported, with progress in each area noted below.

Year-End Close and Audit Preparation

We continue to reconcile last fiscal year's accounts. The goal is to deliver an auditable set of financial statements to the auditors by mid-November.

Middle States Accreditation

The Finance Office is working closely with Institutional Research, the Middle States steering committee, and the Standard 6 team to prepare for the November site visit. We participated in a mock visit on Friday, October 2.

Office Restructure

The restructure of the Finance Office continues. The new procurement agent has started following the retirement of Kevin Caveney.

Banner Implementation

The Banner implementation project has kicked off. We are simplifying the current chart of accounts so it can be translated into the Banner chart of accounts format.

Policies and Procedures

Policy and procedure work continues. New policies are being drafted for the review process.

Capital Budget Request

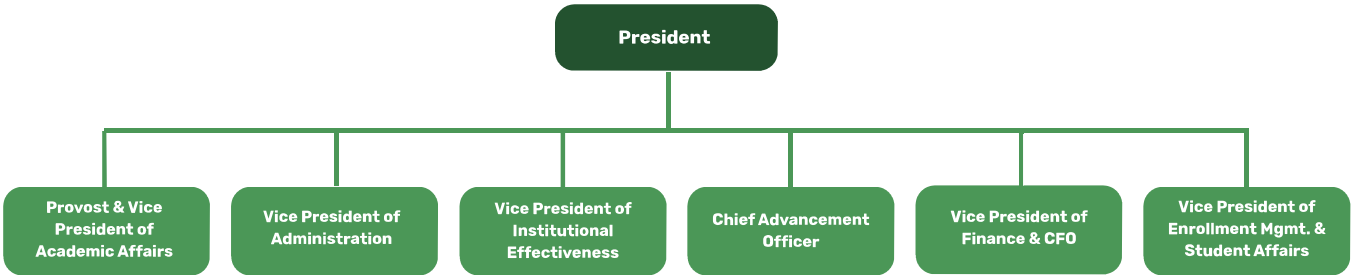
Our capital budget request will be presented for to a vote at Tompkins County on October 6.

Banking

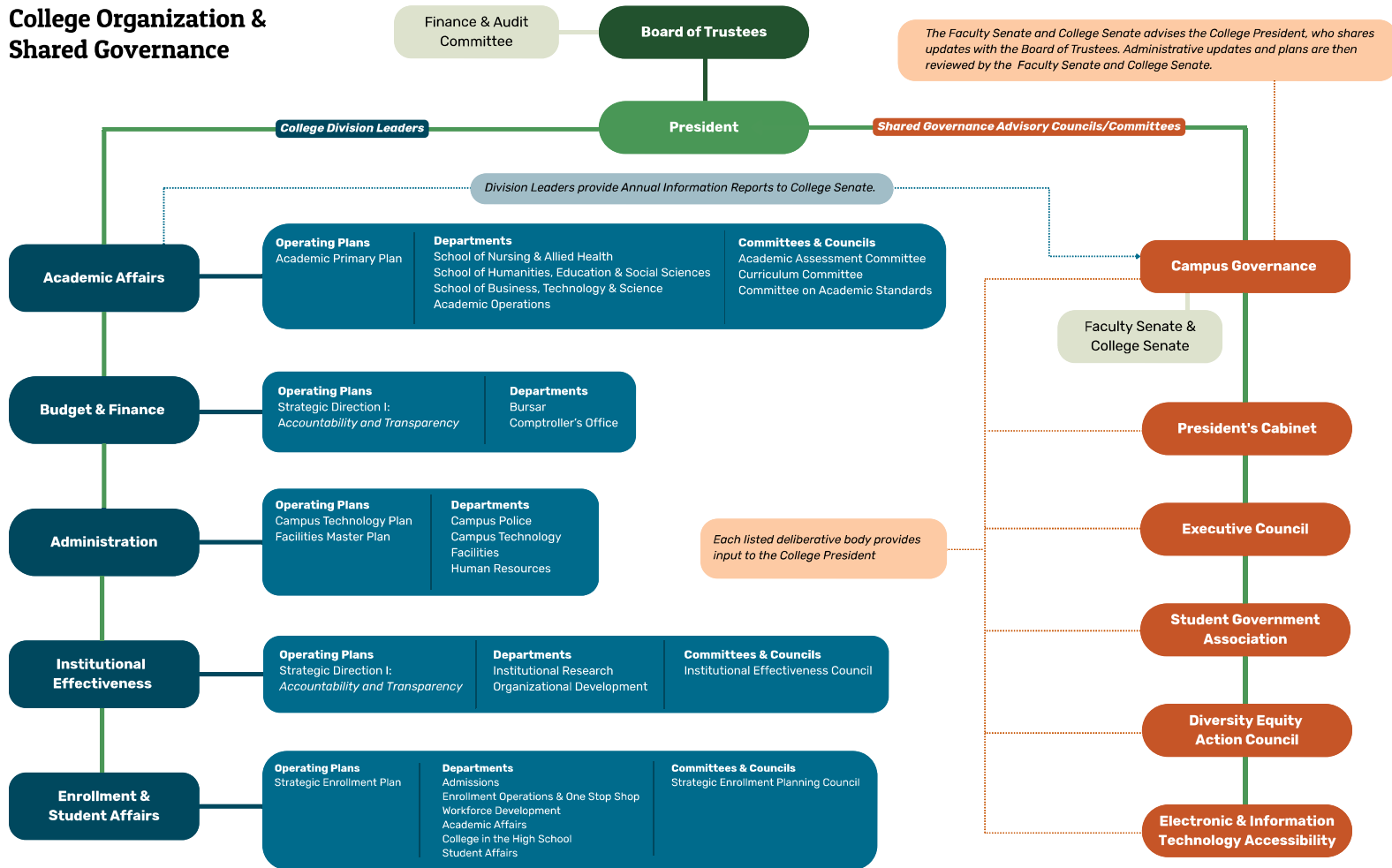
I continue to work on gaining access to all of the College's bank accounts. Once access is complete, I will reduce the number of accounts to a set that better reflects how we use them.

We will also recommend improvements to the banking access protocols. The aim is that future leadership and staff changes do not complicate access to the accounts and the data they contain.

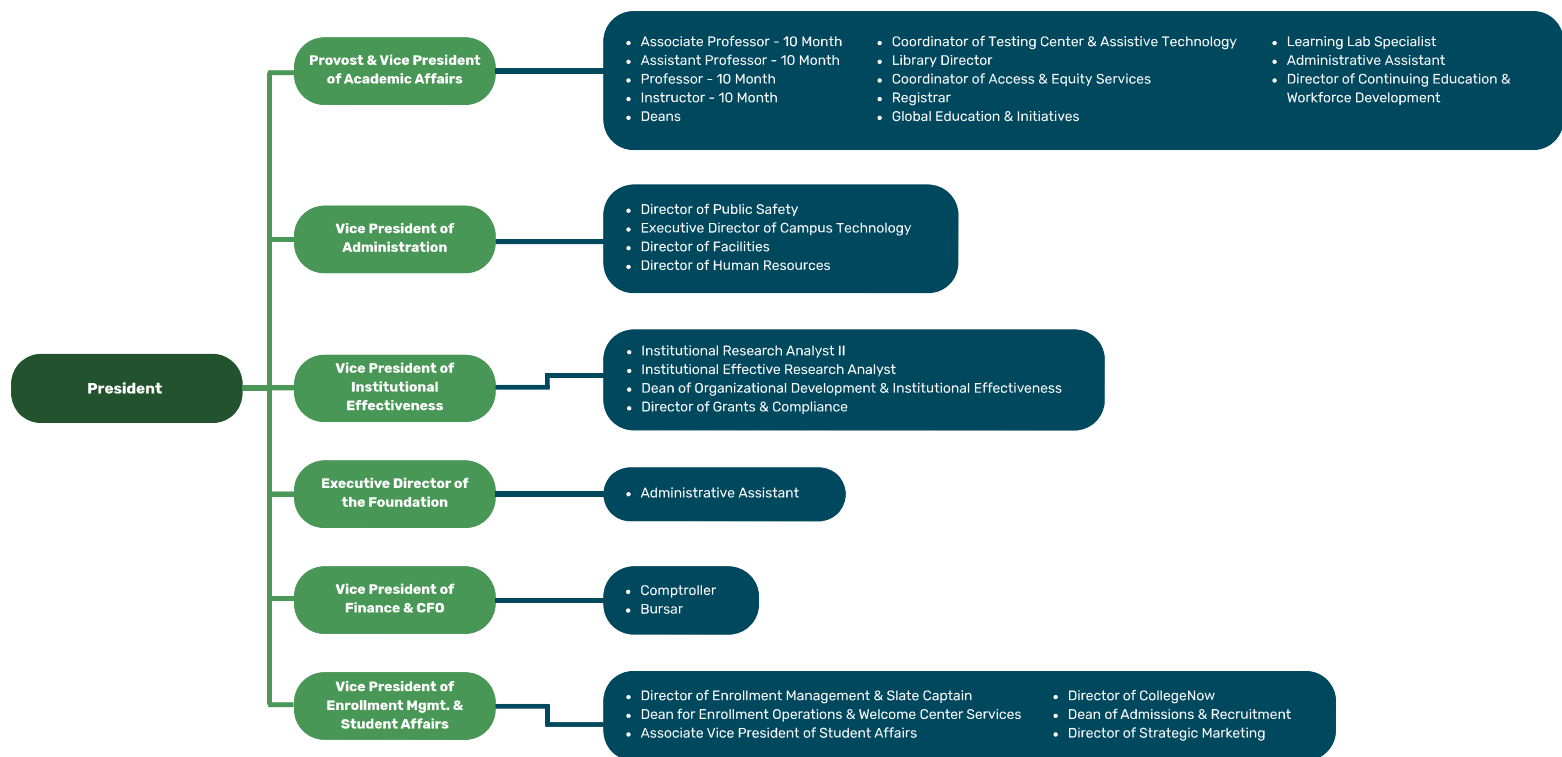
TC3 Divisions



College Organization & Shared Governance



Executive Council & Direct Reports



The following update reflects progress toward the 2026-27 Presidential Goals as approved by the Board of Trustees in September 2026 and shared with the campus community. The goals are organized according to the four focus areas: Middle States Accreditation, Structurally Sound Institution, Fiscally Resilient College and Culturally Dynamic Workplace.

MIDDLE STATES ACCREDITATION

- Preparations continue for the Middle States Accreditation Team Visit scheduled for November 8-11, 2026. The draft schedule was provided to the Team Chair on 9/14; edits are expected 10/9. The schedule is subject to change up to and during the visit depending upon the needs of the Visiting Team.
- The annual campus professional development day known as “Fall Day” on 10/6 was substantially dedicated to preparing the campus for Middle States. The agenda included Mission and Vision in Action, a briefing on key student metrics, strengths and opportunities by standard presented by each co-chair and two campus showcases.

STRUCTURALLY SOUND INSTITUTION

- The draft President’s annual report to the SUNY Chancellor has been completed with input provided by the senior leadership team. The final report will be submitted by 10/31/26.
- Two policies are presented 10/15 for Board approval: Conflict of Interest and Signature Authority. The annual process to review all college policies is underway, beginning with Executive Council review.
- The College’s lead and data coaches from Achieving the Dream conducted their fall visit 9/10-9/11. Three priority areas for this year were identified by the Core and Data Team: Redesigning advising, Gateway course improvement, and Customer Service, with 13 action items identified for completion.
- The College’s chapter of the Phi Theta Kappa International Honor Society has been reinvigorated with 56 student members and leadership support from Dean Stuart Steck, Professor Sophia Georgiakaki and Advisor Marli Welsh. The TC3 Foundation will support membership fees for students in need.
- Discussions with school district leadership have begun regarding the new direction for concurrent enrollment focused on pathways and courses with purpose, and a reduced-rate tuition model to support operational costs.
- Annual goals tied to the Strategic Plan for each of the five Vice Presidents have been approved for 2026-27.

FISCALLY RESILIENT COLLEGE

- The College’s 2026-27 Capital Request to the Tompkins County Legislature was unanimously approved on 10/6. Top priorities are: 1) Classroom technology improvements; 2) Skylight replacements; and 3) Improving soundproofing in classrooms and office spaces. Tompkins County’s share is \$251,100; total including state and Cortland County is \$810,000 for continued progress on the College’s Facilities Master Plan.
- Governor Hochul and Chancellor King announced 10/5 that SUNY Reconnect has been expanded to include adults ages 25-55 who already have a college degree. Process mapping to strengthen college processes for enrollment, finance/billing and books will take place in October, to provide better clarity and consistency for students.
- Feedback has been provided to the TC3 Foundation Board attorney on the recent draft Memorandum of Understanding. An updated draft is due from the Foundation, after which the shared committee will reconvene. The Foundation Board met 10/6; they are committed to a special meeting before their next regularly scheduled meeting in January to approve the final MOA.

CULTURALLY DYNAMIC WORKPLACE

- The College’s 2026-27 PEAKS Leadership Class attended the opening retreat from 9/14-9/16 at Tailwater Lodge in Altmar. I was pleased to join Chris Austen (Campus Police), Eric Jenes (Library/Faculty Senate), Logan Andrews (ASAP), and Lynette Montgomery (Health & Wellness). Other participating colleges are MVCC, OCC and FLCC.
- Monthly President’s meetings with Student Government leadership and leadership meetings with the Faculty Senate, SUNY Faculty Council of Community Colleges, College Senate, the Faculty Association and the Professional Administrators Association have begun for this academic year.



Office of the President

Memorandum

DATE: October 7, 2026

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: Dr. Amy Kremenek, President

SUBJECT: Recommendation for Discontinuance of Culinary Arts AAS

In accordance with the requirements of the State University of New York and the New York State Education Department, the College has formulated and is presenting for your approval a recommendation to discontinue an academic program for Tompkins Cortland Community College:

- Culinary Arts AAS

This 2-year pathway offers limited employment prospects to graduates to earn a living wage in a position available locally that requires the associate degree for entry. Recent and proposed changes to federal financial aid eligibility are tied to earnings by graduates compared to earnings for individuals without the degree.

Program deactivation for Culinary Arts AAS was approved by the Board on May 14, 2025, which paused new student enrollments. As noted in the attached memo from Provost Aaron Tolbert, the Faculty Senate voted to discontinue the Culinary Arts AAS program on September 25, 2026.

A related note is that TC3 maintains an Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degree in Hospitality and Restaurant Management focused on the development of leadership, organization, and customer service skills to prepare graduates for supervisory or management roles in hotels, resorts, restaurants, and tourism operations, or to continue for a bachelor's degree. A transfer agreement for this program was recently signed with the Rochester Institute of Technology for TC3 graduates to earn a Bachelor of Science (BS) degree in RIT's Hospitality and Tourism Management, entering with full junior status at RIT.

With your approval, the College will take action to ensure submission of the program for discontinuance through SUNY required processes, including approval of discontinuance by the SUNY Board of Trustees and the New York State Education Department.



TO: Amy Kremenek, D.M. - President

CC: Tompkins Cortland Community College - Faculty

FROM: Aaron R. Tolbert, Ph.D. - Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs

DATE: 10.5.26

SUBJECT: Culinary Arts. A.A.S. Discontinuance Recommendation

Rationale to Discontinue

Through work with faculty shared governance, the provost's office and faculty have determined that the college's Culinary Arts program should be discontinued.

The reasons for the program's recommended discontinuation are multi-fold. First, in the college's two sponsor counties, there is not a high demand for advanced trained chefs in a high number of restaurants. This means the program served fulfilling a workforce need in communities outside the college's service area. Second, the program underwent at least four distance leadership models over an eleven-year period of operation. In this time none of the models effectively joined a functioning, high-end restaurant with a complete academic program over a sustained period. Although multiple genuine, good faith attempts were made to make the program run, none ultimately succeeded. Third, the rental obligation for the program's space at the Coltivare' restaurant in Ithaca, NY created a cost of program model that was fiscally unsustainable at the enrollment levels of the program.

Through the curricular process, faculty voted to discontinue the program. Votes along all three levels, academic community, Curriculum Committee, and all-faculty indicate faculty's agreement with the provost that this program should be discontinued. The Faculty Senate ratified the vote on 9/25/26 with 23 votes to discontinue, 6 votes to not discontinue, and 7 abstaining votes.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Aaron Tolbert". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**TOMPKINS CORTLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE
RESOLUTION 2026-2027-7**

**Resolution To
Discontinue Culinary Arts A.A.S.**

WHEREAS, New York State Education Law Article 126, Section 6306, Administration of Community Colleges – Boards of Trustees, provides for the responsibility of the Board of Trustees to adopt Curricula, subject to the approval of the State University Trustees, and;

WHEREAS, New York State Education Law and the Bylaws of the Board of Trustees of Tompkins Cortland Community College provide for the responsibility of the College President to formulate and present to the Board of Trustees with recommendations for action on Curriculum; and;

WHEREAS, the Faculty Curriculum Committee and the Faculty Senate have voted to formally discontinue the Culinary Arts A.A.S. program; and

WHEREAS, the Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs has formally recommended to the President to discontinue the Culinary Arts A.A.S. program, and;

WHEREAS, the policy of the State University of New York requires the College President to submit a formal request for Program Discontinuance to the SUNY Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, which, upon approval by SUNY System Administration and the Chancellor, will be presented to the SUNY Board of Trustees for formal approval, now; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of Tompkins Cortland Community College hereby authorizes the discontinuance of the Culinary Arts A.A.S. program, and authorizes the College President to formally submit to the State University of New York for approval of the recommended discontinuance.

STATE OF NEW YORK:

I, NANCY MURPHY, CLERK of the Board of Trustee of

SS:

Tompkins Cortland Community College,

COUNTY OF TOMPKINS:

DO HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing resolution is a true copy of a resolution duly adopted by the Board of Trustees of Tompkins Cortland

Community College at a regular meeting of said Board on this 15th day of October 2026 and the same is a complete copy of the whole of such resolution.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the official seal of Tompkins Cortland Community College to be hereunto affixed this 15th day of October.

Clerk of the Board of Trustees



Vice President Reports

Human Resources

Human Resources continued to support the College and FSA through a high volume of recruitment, onboarding, and compliance activity at the start of the fall semester. The department processed 154 new hires to date, including 99 adjuncts, 3 administrators, 1 faculty member, 2 CSEA employees, 45 student workers, and 4 FSA employees. HR also processed more than 150 teaching and non-teaching salary contracts and coordinated benefits enrollment, employment documentation, and required onboarding activities. In preparation for the upcoming Middle States review, the department is reviewing and strengthening HR practices, documentation, metrics, and processes to demonstrate compliance with institutional standards and support continuous improvement.

Campus Technology

Campus Technology launched kickoff meetings for the two-year Banner project, including an on-campus session with the project manager onboarded through SUNY ITEC. Technical and functional alignment meetings are scheduled from October through January to coordinate data and processes with the five other participating campuses, supported by weekly technical meetings with Ellucian. The PowerCampus and Self Service upgrade was installed and tested in preparation for the October 2 production upgrade. Additional improvements included direct advisor and instructor appointment links in myTC3, accessibility updates to student forms, College Now registration support, and a PowerFAIDS upgrade.

The department strengthened cybersecurity through enhanced firewall rules, multifactor authentication, and a new vulnerability management platform. Automatic recovery following server failure is now in place, quarterly disaster recovery testing was completed successfully, and expanded monitoring supports fraud prevention and network troubleshooting. A comprehensive classroom technology inventory was completed, hybrid classroom setup instructions were simplified, and interim captioning displays continue to support accessibility while permanent options for larger classrooms are under review.

Campus Police

Campus Police observed a slight decline in calls for service as students settled into their academic routines at the close of September. The department completed and published the annual Fire Safety and Security (Clery) Report on its webpage and continues to collaborate with campus departments to improve systems and processes. Officers partnered with Coffee Mania and local law enforcement agencies to raise funds for the CNY Chapter of Special Olympics. The annual Coffee with a Cop event is scheduled for October 7, providing students, employees, and community members an opportunity to meet officers and strengthen campus relationships.

2026–2027 Division Goal Planning

In support of the College Strategic Plan, Strategic Enrollment Plan, and Equity, Diversity, Justice, and Inclusion Plan (EDJI Plan), the Enrollment Management & Student Affairs (EMSA) Division finalized its priorities and goals for 2026-27. During August and September, each office developed action plans aligned with the Division's priorities, creating a coordinated framework for the year ahead.

Division priorities include:

- Transforming academic advising and student success support
- Fully operationalizing the Adult Learner & Reconnect Center
- Advancing Strategic Enrollment Plan (SEP) priorities
- Reimagining College Now and concurrent enrollment pathways
- Strategically aligning scholarship resources with enrollment priorities
- Advancing Division operational effectiveness and integration
- Strengthening Faculty Student Association (FSA) governance and sustainability
- Strengthening institutional customer service and student engagement

The Division will monitor progress throughout the year and use data and assessment to adjust strategies and measure impact.

Strategic Enrollment Plan (SEP): Third Edition

The third edition of the Strategic Enrollment Plan (SEP) has been launched for 2026–2027. The updated plan builds on enrollment data, student and stakeholder feedback, assessment, and progress from the previous plan.

The SEP Council membership has been refreshed to support the next phase of the work. While the previous Council focused primarily on developing and refining the plan, the new Council is designed to bring together individuals who can advance, implement, and assess the identified strategies. The refreshed membership provides broader representation and connects the Council more directly to the areas responsible for moving strategies into action.

The first meeting of the new SEP Council is scheduled for October 16th and will serve as a Data Summit, establishing a shared understanding of current enrollment trends and key student populations and launching the Council's work for the year.

Fall 2: A New Enrollment Opportunity

The College launched Fall 2 as a pilot through a partnership between the Enrollment Management & Student Affairs Division and Academic Affairs, creating an additional entry point for students after the traditional fall start. Ultimately, 69 students enrolled exclusively in Fall 2 courses.

Both Divisions are currently reviewing the pilot, including enrollment results, processes, and opportunities for improvement. The findings will inform planning for the Spring 2 launch, with the goal of strengthening the model and creating additional opportunities for students to enroll throughout the academic year.

1. Academic Portfolio

- a. The college faculty have voted to discontinue the Culinary Arts program. My memo to the president is included in the president's report.
- b. The college is working to build an Associate's in Occupational Sciences (AOS) in Electrical Service Technician in coordination with IBEW Local 241
- c. SUNY (State University of New York) and NYSED (New York State Education Department) have approved name changes for two programs:
 - i. Liberal Arts and Sciences – Humanities A.S. will now be English and Humanities A.S.
 - ii. Liberal Arts and Sciences – Social Sciences A.S. will now be Psychology and Social Sciences A.S.
- d. Faculty continue to work on curricular redesign in a number of other programs to either a) make the SUNY Reconnect eligible, b) meet the strategic plan goal of requiring applied learning experiences, and c) meet changing SUNY general education and other requirements.

2. Retention

- a. The college's work with the Achieving the Dream (ATD) plan moves this year from theory to action as the ATD core team begins its implementation work. To get kickstarted, the college's ATD coaches visited campus on September 10th and 11th. Campus faculty and staff engaged in two days of intentional work to assign and enact the ATD core action plan.
- b. Academic Affairs assigned over 600 students to faculty advisors in July and August improving the timing of advisor assignments into the start of the semester, as opposed to just in advance of advising weeks to better serve our students and provide clarity for faculty.
- c. Academic affairs worked to help create the Fall 2 list of programs eligible for full-time enrollment, and the deans are currently working to condense the numerous semester starts of Spring 2027 into three distinct buckets, Spring (regular start), Spring 2 (10 weeks) and Spring 3 (7.5 week starts). This will allow for smoother entry into the college at multiple points as a full-time student throughout the semester.



Policies

**TOMPKINS CORTLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE
RESOLUTION 2026-2027-5**

Signature Authority

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees of Tompkins Cortland Community College is responsible for the governance, oversight, and fiscal stewardship of the College and for ensuring that contracts, financial commitments, and other official documents are properly authorized; and

WHEREAS, the efficient administration of the College requires that designated officers and employees have appropriate authority to execute contracts, agreements, purchase orders, financial documents, grants, and other instruments on behalf of the College; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees desires to establish clear lines of authority and accountability for the execution of documents and financial commitments while maintaining appropriate internal controls and oversight; and

WHEREAS, the Board recognizes that signature authority should be commensurate with the responsibilities of the position, the nature and value of the transaction, the availability of budgeted funds, and applicable laws, regulations and policies;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Tompkins Cortland Community College Board of Trustees hereby establishes the Signature Authority Policy, attached, effective October 15, 2026; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the President of the College as the College's chief executive officer shall have authority, subject to applicable law and Board policy, to execute contracts, agreements, financial instruments, and other documents on behalf of the College that are within the authority granted by the Board and within approved budgets and appropriations; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the President may delegate signature authority to other College officers or employees when such delegation is necessary or appropriate for the efficient administration of College business, provided that such delegation is documented in writing and is consistent with this resolution and applicable law; and

STATE OF NEW YORK:
SS:
COUNTY OF TOMPKINS:

I, NANCY MURPHY, CLERK of the Board of Trustee of Tompkins Cortland Community College,
DO HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing resolution is a true copy of a resolution duly adopted by the Board of Trustees of Tompkins Cortland Community College at a regular meeting of said Board on this 15th day of October 2026 and the same is a complete copy of the whole of such resolution.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the official seal of Tompkins Cortland Community College to be hereunto affixed this 15th day of October 2026.

Clerk of the Board of Trustees
Tompkins Cortland Community College

TOMPKINS CORTLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE

POLICY

Policy: Signature Authority

Policy Reference No: F-TBD

Date of Last Update: September 9, 2026

Responsible Division: Finance

Purpose:

All contracts and agreements entered into on behalf of Tompkins Cortland Community College require an authorized signatory. This policy identifies those College employees, by title, who are authorized by the Board of Trustees to execute College contracts and agreements and legally bind the College to obligations, including the commitment of financial or other College resources, contained within such contracts and agreements.

Agreements executed by an individual without express permission by this policy or by written prior authorization by the President issued under the Delegation of Signature Authority provisions of this policy shall not be binding on Tompkins Cortland Community College.

Definitions:

Agreement or Contract: any written instrument that creates, modifies, or terminates a legal obligation of the College, regardless of what it is titled. This includes contracts, purchase agreements, leases, licenses, subscriptions, memoranda of understanding, letters of intent, articulation and affiliation agreements, grant awards and subawards, settlement agreements, and any amendment, renewal, change order, or statement of work issued under any of them.

Execute: to sign, initial, or otherwise indicate the College's assent to an agreement, including by electronic signature.

Total Contract Value: the aggregate value of an agreement over its entire term, including all renewal and extension options whether or not the College presently intends to exercise them, all anticipated amendments and change orders, and all reasonably foreseeable contingent amounts. Where an agreement provides for amounts payable to the College, Total Contract Value is the greater of the amounts payable by the College or the amounts receivable by the College.

Authorized Signatory: an individual authorized to execute an agreement by this policy, or by a written delegation issued under this policy.

Affiliated Organization: the Tompkins Cortland Community College Foundation, the Faculty Student Association, and any other entity related to the College by common control, shared personnel, or a support relationship.

References:

Policy B4 – Grants <https://www.tompkinscortland.edu/board-policies/b4-grants>

Policy E1 – Facility Use <https://www.tompkinscortland.edu/board-policies/e1-facility-use>

Policy F2 – Competitive Bidding <https://www.tompkinscortland.edu/board-policies/f2-bidding-competitive>

New York Education Law, Article 126 – Community Colleges

New York General Municipal Law §§ 103 and 104-b – Competitive Bidding and Procurement Policies

New York State Technology Law, Article 3 – Electronic Signatures and Records Act (ESRA)

Contacts:

Office of the Vice President of Finance and Chief Financial Officer.

Policy Statement:

The President and the Vice President of Finance/Chief Financial Officer are authorized to execute contracts and agreements that are financial in nature on behalf of Tompkins Cortland Community College. Signature authority for goods and services contracted on Purchase Orders is contained within the TC3 Budget & Finance Manual, which is subordinate to this policy and may not authorize any signature limit greater than the limits established here. Signature authority is conferred on the position, not on the individual holding it, and is held by any person formally appointed to serve in that position in an acting or interim capacity.

Determining Contract Value:

The level of signature authority required is determined by Total Contract Value, and not by annual expenditure, invoice amount, or the value of an individual purchase order.

A requirement may not be divided, phased, or issued as separate agreements in order to bring any portion of it within a lower level of signature authority. Where the College enters into multiple agreements with the same vendor for the same or related goods or services within a single fiscal year, their values shall be aggregated for purposes of determining the required level of authority.

Where Total Contract Value cannot be determined at the time of execution, the agreement shall be treated as exceeding the highest applicable threshold unless the College's maximum financial exposure is capped in writing within the agreement itself.

Contracts and Agreements with Financial Obligations:

Total Contract Value	Authority to Execute
\$0 up to and including \$50,000	The Vice President of Finance and Chief Financial Officer will execute all contracts and agreements with a Total Contract Value up to and including \$50,000.
Over \$50,000 up to and including \$100,000	The President will execute all contracts and agreements with a Total Contract Value greater than \$50,000 and up to and including \$100,000.
Over \$100,000	The Board of Trustees will approve all contracts and agreements with a Total Contract Value greater than \$100,000. Following Board approval, the President is authorized to execute the approved agreement.

The Vice President of Finance/Chief Financial Officer and the Finance/Purchasing Office will maintain the listing and copies of all executed financial contracts and agreements.

Agreements Reserved to the Board of Trustees Regardless of Value:

The following require approval by the Board of Trustees regardless of Total Contract Value, after which the President is authorized to execute:

- Acquisition, sale, lease, or other disposition of real property, and any easement or license affecting real property;
- Capital construction projects and the related design, engineering, and construction management agreements;
- Borrowing of any kind, including notes, lines of credit, and guarantees; and banking, depository, and investment management agreements;
- Settlement of litigation or of any claim against the College, and any agreement containing an uncapped or unlimited indemnification obligation;
- Collective bargaining agreements;
- Agreements with a total term, including renewal options, exceeding five years;
- Agreements establishing, joining, or dissolving a legal entity, and affiliation or merger agreements;
- Any agreement that requires the approval of the State University of New York, the County sponsor, or the State Education Department. Such approval shall be obtained in writing before the agreement is executed.

Amendments, Renewals, and Change Orders:

An amendment, change order, renewal, or statement of work shall be executed at the level of authority applicable to the Total Contract Value of the agreement as amended, and not the value of the amendment considered alone. Where cumulative amendments raise Total Contract Value above a threshold, the required approval shall be obtained before the amendment is executed.

An agreement containing an automatic renewal or evergreen provision shall be valued over its initial term plus all automatic renewal periods, up to a maximum of five years. The Finance/Purchasing Office shall calendar all non-renewal and termination notice deadlines.

Exercise of a renewal option that was included in the Total Contract Value previously approved does not require new approval, provided the terms are otherwise unchanged.

Contracts and Agreements without Financial Obligations:

Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs: Articulation Agreements, Internship Agreements, Clinical Agreements, Affiliation Agreements, Continuing Education/Workforce Training Agreements

Vice President of Administration: Hiring documents, MOUs related to collective bargaining agreements, Facility Use Agreements

President: All other non-financial contracts or agreements, including Collective Bargaining Agreements

An agreement that generates revenue for the College, or that commits College space, personnel, data, or intellectual property, or that obligates the College to provide goods or services at no charge, is not an agreement “without financial obligations” for purposes of this policy. Such agreements shall be valued under Determining Contract Value and executed at the corresponding level of authority.

Copies of non-financial contracts and agreements will be maintained by the executing office, and a fully executed copy shall be forwarded to the Finance/Purchasing Office for the central contract repository within ten business days of execution.

Grants and Sponsored Programs:

Grant applications, award documents, and subawards shall be executed by the President or the Vice President of Finance/Chief Financial Officer, regardless of value, following review by the Finance Office of any cost-share,

matching, indirect cost recovery, reporting, or audit obligations. Cost-share and matching commitments shall be treated as financial obligations and are subject to the thresholds above. This section is subject to Policy B4 – Grants.

Agreements with the Foundation and Other Affiliated Organizations:

Any agreement between the College and an Affiliated Organization — including service, staffing, management, space use, cost allocation, and reimbursement agreements — shall be in writing and shall state the goods or services to be provided, the basis and frequency of cost allocation or reimbursement, the term, and the termination rights of each party.

Such agreements shall be executed by the President following review by the Vice President of Finance/Chief Financial Officer, and shall be approved by the Board of Trustees where Total Contract Value exceeds \$50,000 or the term exceeds one year. No individual may execute the same agreement on behalf of both the College and the Affiliated Organization, and any individual holding a position in both entities shall recuse themselves from approval on one side of the transaction.

Delegation of Signature Authority:

The President may delegate signature authority in writing. A delegation shall be specific as to scope, shall state a dollar limit that does not exceed the delegating officer's own authority, and shall state an expiration date. Delegated authority may not be further delegated.

All delegations shall be filed with the Finance Office, which shall maintain a current register of delegations in effect and provide that register to the Board of Trustees annually. A delegation terminates automatically on its stated expiration date, upon written revocation, or when the delegating officer ceases to hold the position.

If the office of President is vacant, signature authority is exercised by the individual designated in writing by the Chair of the Board of Trustees. If the office of Vice President of Finance/Chief Financial Officer is vacant, signature authority is exercised by the individual designated in writing by the President. Any such designation shall be reported to the Board of Trustees at its next regular meeting.

Electronic Signatures:

Agreements may be executed by electronic signature in accordance with Article 3 of the New York State Technology Law, provided the signature is applied through a platform approved by the Vice President of Finance/Chief Financial Officer.

Relationship to Procurement and Bidding Requirements:

Signature authority under this policy is separate from, and in addition to, the competitive bidding requirements of General Municipal Law § 103 and the College's procurement policy adopted under General Municipal Law § 104-b and Policy F2. Authority to sign an agreement is not evidence that procurement requirements have been satisfied, and the dollar thresholds in this policy have no bearing on the bidding thresholds in law. Both sets of requirements shall be satisfied before an agreement is executed.

Emergency Execution:

Where a delay in execution would endanger health or safety, threaten College property, or interrupt essential College operations, the President may execute an agreement regardless of Total Contract Value. The President shall promptly notify the Chair of the Board of Trustees, shall document the nature of the emergency in writing, and shall present the agreement to the Board of Trustees for ratification at its next regular meeting.

Unauthorized Signatures and Ratification:

An agreement executed by an individual without authority under this policy is not binding on the College, and no College funds shall be disbursed against it. Such an agreement may be ratified only in writing by the officer or body that would have had authority to execute it originally.

An individual who executes an agreement without authority may be held personally responsible for the obligations incurred and may be subject to disciplinary action.

Contract Records and Retention:

The Finance/Purchasing Office shall maintain a central contract repository containing a complete executed copy of every College agreement, together with the name and title of the signatory, the Total Contract Value, the term, and all renewal, non-renewal, and termination notice deadlines. Executing offices shall forward fully executed agreements to the Finance/Purchasing Office within ten business days.

Contract records shall be retained in accordance with the NYS Archives Records Retention and Disposition Schedule LGS-1. The Vice President of Finance/Chief Financial Officer shall report annually to the Board of Trustees a summary of agreements executed with a Total Contract Value exceeding \$50,000 and a list of all delegations of signature authority in effect.

Responsibilities:

The individual who approves and exercises authority for contracts and agreements under this policy is responsible and accountable for ensuring that:

- They have the authority to approve the transaction or execute a contract;
- All institutional reviews and approvals required by this policy, including legal review where applicable, have occurred and are documented in writing before any commitment is made;
- The transaction, proposal or agreement includes the appropriate approved provisions as required by Finance, Purchasing, Legal or by policy of the College.
- Funds for the transaction have been allocated and are readily available within regularly approved budgets, special appropriations or designated accounts;
- There is no real or apparent conflict of interest on the part of the signatory or any other individual or organization involved in the transaction.
- Any real or apparent conflict of interest has been disclosed in writing to the President, or to the Chair of the Board of Trustees where the President is the signatory, before execution;
- A fully executed copy of the agreement is forwarded to the Finance/Purchasing Office for the central contract repository within ten business days of execution.

Policy Review:

This policy shall be reviewed by the Vice President of Finance/Chief Financial Officer annually, and additionally upon any change in the titles or reporting structure of the positions named in it. The review shall include an assessment of whether the dollar thresholds remain appropriate. Recommended revisions shall be presented to the President and the Board of Trustees for review and approval.

Resolution Number:

2026-2027-5

TOMPKINS CORTLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE

RESOLUTION 2026-2027-6

Employee Conflict of Interest

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees recognizes its responsibility to maintain public trust, transparency, accountability, and ethical standards in all operations of the College; and

WHEREAS, College employees are expected to perform their duties objectively, impartially, and in the best interests of the institution; and

WHEREAS, actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest may arise through outside employment, financial interests, personal relationships, family relationships, procurement activities, consulting arrangements, or other professional and business activities; and

WHEREAS, the Board recognizes the importance of establishing clear procedures for identifying, disclosing, reviewing, and appropriately managing conflicts of interest involving College employees; and

WHEREAS, the Board seeks to ensure that employees do not use their positions, authority, access to information, or institutional resources for improper personal or private benefit;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees hereby adopts the Employee Conflict of Interest Policy, effective October 15, 2026; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all College employees shall be responsible for reviewing and complying with the policy; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the policy shall be reviewed annually and revised as necessary to ensure continued compliance with applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations.

STATE OF NEW YORK:
SS:
COUNTY OF TOMPKINS:

I, NANCY MURPHY, CLERK of the Board of Trustee of Tompkins Cortland Community College,
DO HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing resolution is a true copy of a resolution duly adopted by the Board of Trustees of Tompkins Cortland Community College at a regular meeting of said Board on this 15th day of October 2026 and the same is a complete copy of the whole of such resolution.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the official seal of Tompkins Cortland Community College to be hereunto affixed this 15th day of October 2026.

Clerk of the Board of Trustees
Tompkins Cortland Community College

TOMPKINS CORTLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE

POLICY

Policy: Employee Conflict of Interest

Policy Reference No: XXXX

Date of Last Update: 10/2/2026

Responsible Division: Office of the President/Administration

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Tompkins Cortland Community College operates in compliance with applicable New York State laws and SUNY policies governing conflicts of interest. The fundamental principle guiding its implementation is that no employee should have, or appear to have, any personal or financial interests, relationships, or affiliations that conflict with the interests of the College. The policy is intended to educate employees about situations that generate potential conflicts of interest, and provide procedures for disclosing and addressing actual, potential, or apparent conflicts of interest.

References:

- New York Public Officers Law §§ 73, 73-a, and 74
- New York Education Law Article 126 § 6306
- New York General Municipal Law Article 18 §803
- Guidance of the New York State Commission on Ethics and Lobbying in Government
- [Nepotism Policy](#) (G3)
- Applicable collective bargaining agreements

Contacts:

John Geer, Vice President of Administration, jg128@tompskinscortland.edu, ext. 4440

Nancy Murphy, Assistant to the President, ncm011@tompskinscortland.edu, ext. 4367

Policy Statement:

This Policy applies to all employees of the College, including College officers, employees involved in procurement, contracting, hiring, supervision, purchasing, grants administration, research

administration, vendor management, and financial decision-making, and volunteers acting on behalf of the College.

Conflict of Interest: A conflict of interest exists when an employee's duty or responsibility to the College may be compromised, or may appear to be compromised, by personal, financial, professional, familial, romantic, business, or other outside interests, commitments, obligations, or relationships. A potential conflict of interest exists when circumstances may lead to the divergence between private and College interests. An apparent conflict of interest exists when an independent observer might question whether the employee's actions can reasonably be influenced by considerations of personal gain, financial or otherwise.

Related Person: An employee's spouse, domestic partner, parent, natural or adopted child, grandparent, grandchild, great-grandchild, sibling, or the spouse or domestic partner of the employee's child, grandchild, great-grandchild, or sibling.

Financial Interest: An employee has a "financial interest" if, either directly or indirectly, through a relationship involving business, investment, or related person, he/she has:

- An ownership or investment interest in any entity with which the College has a transaction or affiliation;
- A compensation arrangement with any entity with which the College has a transaction or affiliation;
- A potential ownership or investment interest in, or compensation arrangement with any individual or entity with which the College is considering or negotiating a transaction or arrangement.

NB (nota bene/Take Notice): The definitions contained in this Policy are intended to implement and supplement applicable requirements of New York Public Officers Law §§ 73, 73-a, and 74; General Municipal Law Article 18; New York Education Law Article 126; and applicable SUNY policies. Where a term is specifically defined by statute, that statutory definition shall control.

Examples of Conflicts of Interest

Conflicts of interest may arise in many forms. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Participating in the hiring, promotion, evaluation, supervision, discipline, or termination of a person with whom there exists a familial, romantic, personal, or business relationship;
- Romantic involvement with a person where a reporting, evaluative, or supervisory relationship exists;
- Influencing decisions related to College purchases, contracts, or procurement activities that may result in personal or financial gain;
- Accepting, soliciting, or offering bribes, kickbacks, gifts, gratuities, or other items of value intended to influence official actions;

- Inappropriate use of College funds, assets, personnel, resources, equipment, or confidential information for personal or professional gain;
- Engaging in outside employment, consulting, or business activities that interfere with College responsibilities or create divided loyalties;
- Participating in activities where an outside individual, organization, or entity benefits improperly at the expense of the College; or
- Any activity that may result in improper personal benefit, advancement, favoritism, or the appearance of impropriety.

This list is illustrative and not exhaustive. All College personnel are expected to exercise sound judgment and seek guidance whenever uncertainty exists regarding potential conflicts.

Disclosure Requirements

Duty to Disclose: Employees have a duty to disclose on an ongoing basis any current, proposed, or pending situations that may constitute a conflict of interest and should disclose the material facts relating to any conflict of interest to their supervisor as soon as the existence of a possible conflict of interest is known. Any employee or supervisor who has questions about this policy or its application may seek guidance from the Office of Human Resources.

Annual Disclosures: The College may require conflict of interest disclosure forms and annual certifications from Management/Confidential employees.

Disclosure of Interests in College Agreements: Pursuant to New York General Municipal Law Article 18 §803, employees must promptly disclose in writing any direct or indirect financial interest in an actual or proposed College contract, purchase agreement, lease agreement or other agreement, including oral agreements. The disclosure must be made to the employee's supervisor and the division Vice President, who will consult with the President. The President will inform the College's governing body and notifications will be included in the official record of the governing body.

Reviewing and Managing Conflicts of Interest

Once a conflict of interest is disclosed, the relevant College administrator will determine the next steps with respect to the conflict of interest. The College may determine that the conflict of interest should be reduced, eliminated, or managed, with a management plan. Any management plan will depend upon the facts and circumstances of the specific matter.

Enforcement

Violations of this Policy are subject to disciplinary action, including but not limited to written warnings, removal from decision-making authority, or termination.

Reporting Concerns

Employees are encouraged and expected to report known or suspected violations of this Policy to the College President or Vice President, Administration.

Non-Retaliation

No employee shall be subjected to retaliation for reporting a concern in good faith; seeking ethics advice; participating in an investigation; or cooperating with a compliance review.

Training

The College may require mandatory ethics, conflict-of-interest and relevant training for its employees.

Relationship to Collective Bargaining Agreements

Nothing in this Policy shall be construed to diminish any rights afforded to employees under applicable collective bargaining agreements. To the extent a provision of this Policy conflicts with a collectively bargained provision governing terms and conditions of employment, the collective bargaining agreement shall govern unless a contrary result is required by federal or state law.

Resolution Number:

2026-2027-6

Foundation Update

The Foundation continues to strengthen scholarship/fund administration, donor stewardship, and internal systems while moving forward with a targeted annual campaign centered on an alumni success story.

Scholarship and Fund Review

The Foundation Board Executive Committee has approved the proposed scholarship structure. The Foundation received one \$25,000 endowed scholarship in the last quarter, with several additional opportunities currently in discussion.

Work with Finance is continuing to ensure scholarship accounting, fund tracking, and Foundation procedures are aligned as the new structure is implemented.

Scholarship Administration

Scholarship eligibility criteria are being entered into Awards Management to make fuller use of the system for the current award cycle. Applications close October 31, 2026. Criteria entry and scholarship fund reconciliation remain significant priorities to eliminating a manual award process.

The Foundation has also provided more than \$5,000 in emergency funding for nursing students as supported by funds dedicated for this purpose.

Annual Campaign

The annual campaign is moving into development, with donor-facing materials currently being drafted, including the campaign letter, pledge card, and supporting materials. The Foundation is also working with an alum whose story will serve as the centerpiece of the campaign.

As materials are finalized, the Board of Trustees will have an opportunity at an upcoming October or November meeting to preview the campaign and provide feedback prior to launch. This work will also include updates to the Foundation's public-facing website to better align online content with current fundraising and engagement efforts.

Donor Stewardship

Donor-facing materials and processes continue to be reviewed and updated to create greater consistency in gift documentation, acknowledgements, fund designation, and stewardship. This work is focused on ensuring donor intent is clearly documented and that strong practices are in place as fundraising activity grows.

Data and Constituent Records

Continued work in Raiser's Edge is improving constituent records, addressing duplicate and

incomplete information, and establishing more consistent data practices. This work will support stronger donor stewardship, alumni engagement, reporting, and future fundraising efforts.

Retiree Breakfast

The Retiree Breakfast was held on October 2nd, with 22 participants gathering to reconnect and hear from President Kremenek. The event generated \$1,600 in donations to the TC3 Fund and also resulted in one attendee joining the Alumni & Development Committee, with an interest in volunteering to help rebuild the Alumni Network for the Foundation.



Informational Items

26 – 28 NYCCT Executive Committee: Wendy Waters, Chair (MVCC); Grant Valentine, Chair-Elect (RCC); Doreen Parsley Davis, Secretary (CGCC); Thomas Weddell, Treasurer (OCCC); George Cushman, Immediate Past Chair (FLCC)

Follow us & stay connected



EDUCATION

Educational Module

Federal Earmarks Participation - Don't Leave Money on the Table (virtual)

Building on discussions from the Advocacy Panel at this year's conference (Friday, September 18), join us **Thursday, October 8, 4:00–5:00 pm** for a deeper dive into federal earmark money, with **Whitney Riggs, Director of Federal Relations, SUNY**. Please share this with your college government relations staff who may want to attend. [Register Here](#)



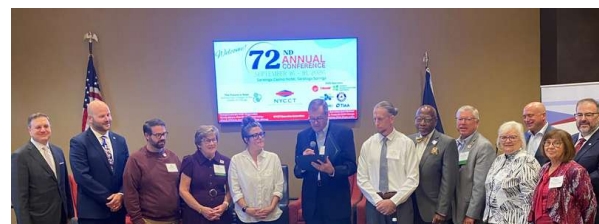
- 27** community colleges represented (23 SUNY, 4 CUNY)
- 49** trustees, including 6 members of the SUNY and CUNY Boards of Trustees
- 22** college presidents
- 9** student trustees and student delegates

Conference Highlights:

New trustees started the week at the Trustee Institute, with sessions on governance, funding, Middle States accreditation, and the Open Meetings Law. SUNY Chancellor John B. King, Jr. spoke on the future of community colleges. Alicia M. Alvero, CUNY Executive Vice Chancellor and University Provost, and Valerie Dent, SUNY Vice Chancellor for Community Colleges, led a panel showing growing SUNY-CUNY collaboration. Todd McLees returned for the third year in a row to talk about AI, and the Expert Roundtables covered everything from finance to energy management.

Honoring Governor Hochul for Reconnect

NYCCT adopted a resolution honoring Governor Kathy Hochul for creating and expanding New York's Reconnect program. Reconnect gives eligible adults ages 25–55 free tuition, fees, books, and supplies for associate degrees in high-demand fields. In its first year, more than 16,500 New Yorkers applied and more than 12,000 enrolled at our community colleges. Danielle McMullen, Assistant Secretary for Education (Higher Education) in the Office of Governor Kathy Hochul, accepted the resolution on the Governor's behalf. She also joined our Advocacy Panel that morning.



George Cushman (center) reads the resolution honoring Governor Hochul. **Left to right:** Evan Stavisky (Parkside Group), Will Schwartz (SUNY), SUNY Reconnect student Geoffrey Hellauer-Geiger (FLCC), Wendy Waters (MVCC), Danielle McMullen (Governor's Office), George Cushman (FLCC), SUNY Reconnect student Keagan Allen (DCC), Grant Valentine (RCC), Thomas Weddell (OCCC), Doreen Parsley Davis (CGCC), Stephen Acquario (NYSAC), Donna Mihalik (FLCC), Dermot Smyth (CUNY)

Meet Your 2026–2028 Executive Committee

At the Board of Directors business meeting on September 17, NYCCT elected its new Executive Committee:



CHAIR
Wendy Waters
Mohawk Valley



CHAIR-ELECT
Grant Valentine
Rockland



SECRETARY
Doreen Parsley Davis
Columbia-Greene



TREASURER
Thomas Weddell
SUNY Orange



IMMEDIATE PAST CHAIR
George Cushman
Finger Lakes

Thank you, George, for your leadership as Chair. Congratulations to Wendy and our new officers!

What Attendees Told Us

Big takeaways:

37

- **AI was the most talked-about topic.** Many attendees want policies and a strategic plan for using AI well across their colleges.
- **Finances matter.** Many trustees plan to look at how their college invests its cash and whether it has an investment policy.
- **Energy management** is a real way to save money.
- **There's real momentum for SUNY-CUNY collaboration.**

✨ Next Step on AI: Resources from Todd McLees

Conference attendees asked for help with AI policies and planning, and Todd McLees has shared a resource to help. His **Responsible AI Guide** gives college leaders and AI task forces a research-based foundation, a model policy you can adapt, and practical guidance. That leaves more time for the decisions only your college can make: what fits your mission, serves your students, and supports your people.

Coming soon: An interactive digital experience that builds on Todd's conference keynote, offering another way to keep learning and exploring AI. We'll share the link as soon as it's available.



Friday, September 18: Trustees from across SUNY and CUNY fill the room for a full day of sessions at the 72nd Annual Conference.



Front row, left to right: Arianna Rodriguez (OCCC), Akalia Dixon (CUNY BCC), Jose Leon (TCCC), Akkeem Polack (CUNY), Hema Singh (SCCC). **Back row, left to right:** Keagan Allen (DCC), Geoffrey Hellauer-Geiger (FLCC), Rusty Smetanyak (MCC), Peter Bambino (former Student Trustee, OCCC)



On stage, left to right: Anne Fenton, CUNY Secretary of the Board of Trustees; Alicia M. Alvero, CUNY Executive Vice Chancellor & University Provost; Valerie Dent, SUNY Vice Chancellor for Community Colleges



NYCCT Educational Foundation Committee

Donna Mihalik, Chair (FLCC); Michael Arvanites (CUNY); E. Bryan DalPorto (SUNY Niagara); Michael Francis Dupree (DCC); Dana Jerrard (MVCC); Linda Van Buskirk (CCC)

NYCCT's Educational Foundation is moving out of the shadows as a mostly silent partner of NYCCT. The Foundation has been the main conduit for receiving the conference registration funds, which provide for our very pleasant hotel and meals—and since the Foundation is a 501(c)(3), we have not been taxed on those major items. While this function has proved to be very important, it has been limited to conference work. Now the Foundation has restated its bylaws and has passed a resolution to advance its Strategic Framework with the primary goals being to “establish a comprehensive trustee professional development support program, and develop a sustainable philanthropic and educational strategy consistent with the Foundation’s mission and the priorities of the Association.”

The Foundation is chaired by Donna Mihalik. NYCCT thanks her and her committee for this important work on behalf of all community college trustees.



From left to right: Dana Jerrard (MVCC); Michael Arvanites (CUNY); Donna Mihalik (FLCC); Linda Van Buskirk (CCC); E. Bryan DalPorto (SUNY Niagara)

From your ACCT Regional Coordinator

I look forward to seeing many of you at the ACCT Leadership Congress in Chicago! A few highlights³⁸ for New York trustees:

- **Vote for ACCT leadership** at the Northeast Regional Caucus, Thursday, Oct. 22 at 2:00 p.m.
- **Join NYCCT colleagues for a free breakfast** on Friday, Oct. 23 at the Hyatt Regency (*Concourse Level, East Tower, Randolph 2*) from 7:00 am – 8:00 am. [Register Here](#)
- **Attend sessions led by New York trustees.** They're sure to be excellent.
- **Cheer on our national award nominees** at the Awards Gala on Friday, Oct. 23:
 - Donna Mihalik, FLCC – Trustee Leadership Award
 - Mohawk Valley Community College – Impact and Success Award
 - Dr. Alexis Vogt, Professor of Optics, Monroe CC – Faculty Member Award

Ann Fleming Brown, Board Chair, SUNY Schenectady County Community College Ann.Fleming.Brown@gmail.com

COMMUNICATION

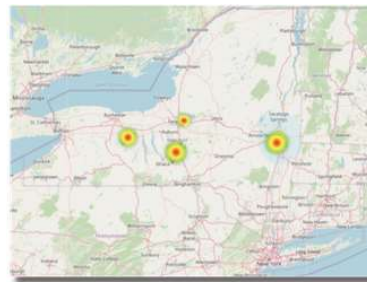
Communications Committee:

Doreen Parsley Davis, Chair (CGCC); Ann Fleming Brown (SCCC); David Males (JCC); Grant Valentine (RCC); Linda Van Buskirk (CCC); Wendy Waters (MVCC)

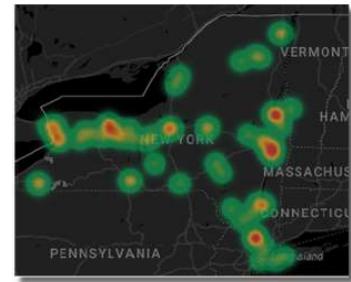
Welcome to Doreen Parsley Davis, NYCCT's new Secretary, who now chairs the Communications Committee as our bylaws provide. We thank David Males for his leadership, and we're glad he's staying on as a member.

Our reach has never been higher. In May 2025, visits to the NYCCT website came from just a handful of places. Today, visitors come from across the state, from Buffalo to Long Island and the North Country. That growth is thanks to our partnership with Impact X Marketing, social media posts two to three times a week, and links from college websites to NYCCT. In one recent 28-day period, profile views rose 48% and engagement rose 90%. Our media outreach is working too: WBNG-TV in Binghamton and NPR picked up our story on SUNY Reconnect.

May 2025



September 2026



What's next: The committee is turning photos and student videos from the Annual Conference into short clips for social media and advertising, plus a longer "Why Community College?" video for the website. Members are also working with the Government Relations Committee on a 30-second advocacy message for budget season.

Does your college's website link to NYCCT? If not, let us know and we'll help set it up.

ADVOCACY

Government Relations Committee

George Cushman, Chair (FLCC); Diana Kastenbaum (GCC); Patrick Madden (HVCC); David McNally (NCCC); Devi Momot (CCC); Mary Alice Panek (GCC); George Raneri (HVCC); James Testani (BCC); Gail Tylec (SUNY Niagara); Grant Valentine (RCC); Wendy Waters (MVCC); Thomas Weddell (OCCC); Allen Williams (MCC)

George Cushman has returned as Government Relations Chair, and we thank Grant Valentine for his leadership over the past two years. The committee will meet every other week through the state budget process. In recent meetings with the Division of the Budget, Assembly Ways and Means, and Senate Finance, we made the case for flexible, unrestricted operating aid that lets colleges meet local needs. We are now scheduling meetings with legislators across the state to continue these conversations, and we'll invite local college presidents and trustees to join. The committee supports a **\$25 million request for unrestricted operating aid**. The case rests on high-cost programs, pressure on faculty pay, limits on tuition, and the cost of serving part-time students. More details on Albany advocacy plans will follow.

Sponsor Spotlight

Thank You to Our 2026 Conference Sponsors³⁹
We're grateful to the partners and the expertise they brought to the Expert Roundtable Sessions.



TRANE



ENERGY
INFRASTRUCTURE
PARTNERS



BibliU



Making Every Energy Dollar Count

EIP led roundtables on energy management and heard what our colleges are dealing with: aging buildings, rising costs, and the need to make the case for capital funding. **Their advice:** make energy management part of your strategic plan. Bring campus leaders and facilities staff together to review your energy goals. Federal, state, and utility programs may help pay for projects.

EIP Associate Program Manager Zoe Benson, zoe.benson@energyinfrapartners.com can help you get started. You can also read EIP's white paper on [Strategic Energy Management](#).



Is Your College's Cash Working as Hard as It Could?

three+one's Expert Roundtable was one of the most talked-about sessions at the conference. Its top takeaways for trustees:

- Liquidity often gets overlooked, even when boards review budgets and audits closely.
- Across the 30 SUNY community colleges, year-end cash equaled 47.2% of annual expenditures.
- Investment and fund balance policies give finance teams clear authority and keep things steady through leadership changes.
- Review long-standing financial partners from time to time to make sure your college is getting good value.



[Download the three+one handout](#) | Questions? Contact CEO Garrett Macdonald, gam@threeplusone.us



TRANE See You in Chicago!

Heading to the ACCT Leadership Congress? Look for Trane:

Thu., Oct. 22, 3:15 pm: Building the AI-Ready Workforce Through Living Learning Labs (Randolph 1AB)

Fri., Oct. 23, 2:15 pm: Industry Experts Answer Your Questions (Grand Hall G)

Thu., Oct. 22, 7:30 pm: Trane networking reception at LondonHouse Chicago. Space is limited!



[Session details](#) | [Register for the reception](#)



Missed a Previous Update? All past Board Chair Monthly Updates are archived on our website. Find them [HERE](#).



UPCOMING EVENTS

October 8, 2026 | 4:00 pm virtual

NYCCT Educational Module: Federal Earmarks Participation - Don't Leave Money on the Table [REGISTER HERE](#)

October 23, 2026 | 7:00 am in-person Hyatt Regency Chicago
2026 ACCT Leadership Congress: NY Delegation Breakfast
[REGISTER HERE](#)

April 15 - 16, 2027

2027 Spring Convening at Finger Lakes CC